

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2909

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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DEPT PASS CAIRO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS, LY

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER: LIBYA-EGYPT

UNITY

1. IN ADDITION TO DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING MIDDLE EAST AND PERSIAN GULF (SEE SEPTELS), DURING MY AUGUST 16 CALL FOREIGN MINISTER MASMOUDI DISCUSSED CURRENT STATUS OF MOVES TOWARD EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN UNITY.

2. MASMOUDI STATED THAT IN HIS OPINION QADHAFI IS MAKING A SERIOUS ERROR IN PUSHING FOR UNITY WITH EGYPT BECAUSE (A) NASSERISM IS UNPOPULAR IN EGYPT AND (B) SADAT FEARS QADHAFI'S INFLUENCE IN EGYPT PARTICULARLY AMONG THE MILITARY FORCES. MASMOUDI THOUGHT THAT DESPITE SEEMING PROGRESS TOWARDS UNITY, LATTER WOULD NOT BE ACHIEVED IN THE REAL SENSE BECAUSE OF WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A "RUPTURE DE CHARME" BETWEEN SADAT AND QADHAFI.

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3. MASMOUDI CONTINUED THAT TUNISIA FOR ITS PART LOOKS TOWARDS

BRINGING LIBYA INTO GREATER COOPERATION WITH MAGHREBIAN STATES. ACCORDING TO MASMOUDI, PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE OF ALGERIA IS ALSO INTERESTED IN STRENGTHENING MAGHREBIAN COOPERATION. MASMOUDI ADDED THAT THE PROBLEM, HOWEVER, IS THAT QADHAFI (A) PLACES TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON ISLAMIC ANSWERS TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE ARABS AND (B) UNDERTAKES TO SOLVE TOO MANY PROBLEMS AT ONE TIME.

4. MASMOUDI CONCLUDED THAT AS UNITY WITH EGYPT FAILS, QADHAFI WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY FRUSTRATED. THIS IS ANOTHER REASON WHY TUNISIA AND ALGERIA MUST WORK TO WIN QADHAFI OVER TO POSITIVE COOPERATION WITH THEM. OTHERWISE IN HIS FRUSTRATION QADHAFI MAY EMBARK ON ADVENTURES IN THE MAGHREB. MASMOUDI EMPHASIZED THAT TUNISIA'S POLICY AT THIS TIME IS ONE OF PEACEFUL AND COOPETATIVE CO-EXISTENCE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS.

5. COMMENT: MASMOUDI STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE WAS EXPRESSING HIS PERSONAL OPINIONS ON CURRENT STATE OF LIBYAN-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. HE IS OBVIOUSLY BECOMING CONCERNED ABOUT UNPREDICTABLE LIBYAN LEADER, A CONCERN WHICH WE KNOW IS SHARED BY OTHERS IN TUNISIAN ESTABLISHMENT.

SEELYE

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

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